

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

1.-9. (Canceled)

10. (Currently amended) A method for producing a cell line permissive for HCV replication, the method comprising:

- (a) providing ~~[[a]]~~ an Huh-7.5 cell line on deposit with the ATCC as accession number PTA-8561 that further comprises a replicating genomic or subgenomic HCV RNA;
- (b) obtaining a culture of said cell line that supports replication of said genomic or subgenomic HCV RNA;
- (c) curing said cell line of ~~(a)~~ (b) of HCV RNA, wherein said curing comprises treatment with an antiviral agent; and
- ~~(e)~~ (d) identifying sublines of said cured cell line of (b) that are permissive for HCV replication.

11. (Canceled)

12. (Currently amended) The method of claim 10 ~~claim 11~~, wherein said agent is an antiviral cytokine.

13. (Previously presented) The method of claim 12, wherein said antiviral cytokine is interferon.

14. (Previously presented) The method of claim 10 wherein said cell line of (a) comprises a replicating subgenomic HCV RNA containing no adaptive mutations.

15. (Previously presented) The method of claim 10, wherein said cell line of (a) comprises a replicating subgenomic HCV RNA that comprises an adaptive mutation.

16.-32. (Canceled)

33. (Currently amended) [[A]] An Huh-7.5 cell line on deposit with the ATCC as accession number PTA-8561 produced by the method of claim 19.

34. (Currently amended) The [[A]] cell line ~~according to~~ of claim 33, wherein said host cell line contains subgenomic HCV RNA.

35. (Currently amended) The [[A]] cell line ~~according to~~ of claim 34, wherein said subgenomic HCV RNA comprises an adaptive mutation.

36. (Currently amended) The cell line of claim 35, wherein said adaptive mutation is S2204I, S2204V, or S2204A, said position being identified by alignment with the genotype 1b Con1 full-length HCV genome (~~Genbank Accession no. AJ238799~~ SEQ ID NO:27) commencing with the core-coding region.

37.-38. (Canceled)

39. (New) The cell line of claim 33, wherein said cell line contains genomic HCV RNA.

40. (New) The cell line of claim 39, wherein said genomic HCV RNA comprises an adaptive mutation.

41. (New) The cell line of claim 40, wherein said adaptive mutation is S2204I, S2204V, or S2204A, said position being identified by alignment with the genotype 1b Con1 full-length HCV genome (SEQ ID NO:27) commencing with the core-coding region.